

Appeal in behalf of the Building Fund

—OF THE—

COLLEGE SCHOOL, VICTORIA.

The Council of the College School having met to consider the present position of the Institution, consequent upon the destruction of the School House by fire on the morning of the 17th instant, venture to submit the following statement to the general public.

The College School has, for the last 22 years, been doing a most important and useful work in the education and training of boys. It has experienced the ordinary fluctuations to which all Schools without endowment are necessarily liable, but happily has survived them, and to all appearances was entering upon a new period of usefulness and prosperity. The expectation thus formed was for the moment dispelled by the unfortunate fire which on Saturday last deprived the School of its long-established local habitation on Church Hill. This disaster, unfortunate as it undoubtedly is, may however prove a turning point in the history of the School, and tend eventually to its re-foundation on a wider basis, with a greater reach in the way of acceptability and of usefulness to the Province at large.

Two questions came prominently before the Council in their deliberations—

I. The desirability of enlarging the present School foundation by the establishment of a Senior or College Department, for the higher education of youth, with a view to preparation for the learned Professions—a Charter to be in time secured for the College, granting power to confer the usual degrees of an University—And

II. The extension of the present School into a large Boarding School, which may draw its boys not only from the Island and Mainland portions of our Province, but from the adjacent American States.

In considering these two questions the Council were unanimous in advising both. They feel that the claims of higher education in a community such as ours are now advanced enough to call for fuller development and enlarged opportunities. They are also of opinion that even on material grounds, the establishment of a good Boarding School for boys in Victoria must be an object which all would have an interest in aiding and furthering, as being beneficial in many ways to the community generally.

As a local Day School for Victoria, the College School would doubtless, as in previous years, continue to supply a felt want, but as a Boarding School its influence and advantages, direct and indirect, would be felt more immediately in our midst. American feeling is sufficiently in favor of English training for their children, to justify the expectation that a considerable number of boys might be drawn from the United States to such an Institution, and the well-known healthiness and beautiful surroundings of Victoria would undoubtedly attract temporary inhabitants desirous of availing themselves of the educational advantages thus offered. At the same time it is hoped that such a School efficiently conducted and administered would enable it to retain, as pupils, boys of our own Province, whose parents have been compelled to send them elsewhere for the educational benefits which the College School would then be in a position to supply.

The Council would not for a moment disguise the fact that the Institution thus proposed would be in connection with the Church of England, but they are able to point confidently to the boys who have passed through the School during the last twenty-two years, many of whom were not Church of England boys, in proof that no religious tests or requirements would be asked in the future of either students or boys.

The Council have therefore no hesitation in appealing for the sympathy and aid of the Public in furtherance of the two special objects at which they aim, viz., the development of higher (University) education, and the establishment of a Provincial Boarding School, fully equipped in respect of buildings and appurtenances as may befit what it is hoped may be the great English Public School of the Pacific Coast.

Efforts will doubtless be made for the erection of such a College elsewhere in this Province, but it is hoped that Victoria may obtain and hold the first place in educational as in political position, and that the primacy once gained will never be lost.

The Council would finally mention that they have as a nucleus of the proposed Building Fund the sum of \$1,000 (Insurance on the late School House) the money value of three Town lots, forming the former site on Church Hill, a fresh and admirable site for the College and School combined, on Church property on the North-Western slope of Beacon Hill, the certain help of the Ven. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the hoped for assistance of friends of Religious Education in England.

The Council trust therefore that they are not expecting too much in looking for the cordial and generous help of all classes in Victoria and the Province generally, in aiding them to improve such an opportunity as the present crisis has afforded. A good building which will prove an ornament to the City; an efficient School which will attract pupils from near and distant parts; the requirements of the School, of its boys, of visitors at the various mercantile and other establishments in the City—All induce the hope that in contributing to such an object the Public will be advancing the material interests of Victoria as well as of the Province at large.

Victoria, June 23rd, 1882.